from the ceiling of 50%. Another Bill for amendment of the Constitution, i.e. "The Constitutional (Eighty-Eighth Amendment) Bill, 1999" to restore relaxations in qualifying marks and standards of evaluation in the matters of promotions of employees of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 23.12.1999.

**States facing financial crunch**

2757. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) name of the States4Jnion Territories facing financial crunch and unable *to* repay Central loans or sharing the matching grant Centrally-sponsored scheme; and

(b) the details of the action taken *to* improve the internal resources of the States^Union Territories by providing higher allocation from the Centre?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION, ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) Some States, which are unable to match the receipts and expenditure in their budget, experience periodic Ways & Means related financial problems. To enable such States to deal with the situation there is an agreement between the States and RBI to provide Ways & Means support.

For providing Plan assistance to States, budgetary *support* from the Central Government is given as per the advice of the Planning Commission. The pattern and quantum of the revenue grants to the States are determined on the basis of the recommendations of the Finance Commission.

The issue of financial problems being faced by the States was addressed in the 48th meeting of the National Development Council (NDC). The need for initiating fiscal reforms by the States was recognized in this meeting. As a follow-up of the NDC decision some State Governments have evolved and undertaken their own medium-

term fiscal reforms programme aimed at reduction in revenue deficit. The Government of India has extended medium term assistance during 1999-2000 to those States who have entered into an agreement with Government of India for initiating monitorable fiscal reforms programme. These States are: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim and Uttar Pradesh.

An Official Committee has also been set up to monitor and review the fiscal reforms programme of the States.

**Fund for agricultural development In Maharashtra**

2758. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to spend some amount of total funds for the schemes meant for agricultural development in Maharashtra State;

(b) if so, what is the percentage of the funds allotted to Maharashtra specially for ADIVASI district for its utilization, district-wise;

(c) whether Government have earmarked some blocks in far-flung areas of the State for some special assistance; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION, ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) to (d) The outlay approved for Annual Plan 2000-01 for Maharashtra stands at Rs. 11500 crore. Out of this, the State Government propose to spend Rs. 537.60 crore for agriculture and allied services. The amounts are not allocated separately for ADIVASI district. The earmarking of funds for some blocks in far-flung areas of the State vests with the State Government.